

REMARKS

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 20-24 recite allowable subject matter, and that claims 35, 36 and 38 are allowed.

Amendments

Claim 1 is amended to further clarify the composition of the first effluent resulting from the contact with the zeolitic adsorbent. See, for example, Table 3 which shows separating ratios α of clearly greater than 1 for the multibranched paraffin 2,3-dimethylbutane versus the mono-branched paraffin 2-methyl pentane.

This amendment places the application in condition for allowance, or, at the very least, reduces the number issues for appeal. Entry is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC §102(b) and §103

Claims 1, 2, 19, 28-34 and 39 are rejected as allegedly being anticipated in view of Zinnen et al. (U.S. 5,744,684). This rejection is respectfully traversed. In addition, claims 25-27 and 37 are rejected as allegedly being obvious in view of Zinnen et al. (U.S. 5,744,684). This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

In the process of U.S. '684, from the isomerization zone 21 there is discharged both a raffinate stream and an extract stream via lines 6 and 7, respectively. The raffinate is described as containing n-pentane desorbent and isomerized products whereas the extract is characterized as containing mainly undesired by products, n-pentane desorbent, and branched pentanes. See column 7, lines 33-67.

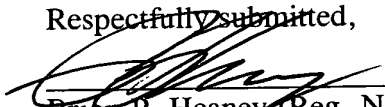
Table 1 of US '684 (see columns 11-12) describes the content of the extract and raffinate streams. Extract stream 7 contains no multibranched paraffins. On the other hand, raffinate stream 6 does contain a small amount of multibranched paraffins. However, this stream is predominately made up of mono-branched paraffins. Specifically, raffinate stream 6 contains 54.2% mono-branched paraffins and only 37.3 % multibranched paraffins. Thus, the raffinate stream from isomerization zone 21 clearly does not consist essentially of multibranched paraffins.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Zinnen et al. fails to anticipate and/or render obvious applicants' claimed invention. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC §102(b) and §103 is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version With Markings To Show Changes Made**".

Respectfully submitted,


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Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

--1. (Twice Amended) A process for separating multibranched paraffins comprised in a hydrocarbon feed comprising hydrocarbons containing 5 to 8 carbon atoms per molecule, wherein said hydrocarbon feed contains linear, monobranched and multibranched paraffins, comprising:

bringing said hydrocarbon feed into contact with at least one zeolitic adsorbent whereby multibranched paraffins are separated from said hydrocarbon feed, and fractionating said hydrocarbon feed into at least two distinct effluents, a first effluent consisting essentially of which is rich in multibranched paraffins and having has a high octane number, and a second effluent which has a low octane number,

said adsorbent having at least two types of channels, principal channels with an opening defined by a ring of 10 oxygen atoms and secondary channels with an opening defined by a ring of at least 12 oxygen atoms, said secondary channels only being accessible to said hydrocarbon feed via said principal channels.--